



ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

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Produced by the Kentucky Department of Education

What parents can expect from Common Core

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Common Core better prepares your child for success.

The new standards – what your child should know and be able to do at each grade level – are aligned to college/career expectations so when your child graduates from high school, he or she will be ready to take the next step into a college/career and be successful.

It builds clear expectations for students, including the ability to:

- apply mathematics in real-world situations
- read and analyze both literature and informational text
- construct viable arguments and critique reasoning of others
- solve problems
- communicate effectively

Common Core is one of many changes in Kentucky public schools that when combined are designed to provide a world-class education for all students.

Rigorous standards, aligned assessments, teacher and leader effectiveness, and professional learning and growth of our educators all work together to maximize student potential and ensure college/career-readiness for all students. The system promotes:

- deeper understanding of the key concepts students need to succeed as independent thinkers
- students' ability to apply knowledge to real-world situations
- instruction that places more emphasis on understanding and application as opposed to memorization and test taking

The standards are structured so students build upon what they learn. Concepts become increasingly complex as students moves from grade to grade.

Your child will be prepared to compete for the best jobs.

Because the standards are on par with what is being taught in other states and leading countries around the world, your child will be ready for the newest 21st-century jobs and to compete in the global economy.

The Common Core allows for local decision making.

The standards provide a framework for learning expectations; they do not dictate curriculum. The Kentucky Board of Education is responsible for establishing standards in the various content areas. Local school boards, administrators and teachers are responsible for determining how to teach the standards, including selection of instructional materials and instructional practices.

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Common Core, from Page 1**Common Core saves you money.**

Because the standards are more rigorous and aligned with college/career expectations, your child is less likely to need remediation in college – courses that cost money but don't count toward a degree. Students who don't have to take these remedial courses are more likely to complete college and earn a degree.

Even if your child doesn't go to college, he or she should be better equipped with the skills he or she needs to land a good-paying job and become financially independent at an earlier age.

Common Core is working.

Since implementation of the Common Core (Kentucky Core Academic Standards), we've seen improved college/career-readiness rates, improved graduation rates, lower remediation costs and more successful transitions to college and career.

Common Core assessments more accurately reflect student preparation than previous state tests.

Test scores dropped the first year under the Common Core, because the standard changed from basic proficiency to college- and career-readiness, which demands more of our students.

Scores will be low for a few years but will start improving the longer the standards are taught. Remember we've raised the bar. Just like a high jumper who is used to clearing 6 feet, if the bar goes up to 12 feet, it takes them a while to learn what they have to do to clear it. They have to train and refine their technique. It will take time for teachers and students to get used to the more-rigorous standards and the kind of teaching and learning they demand. Scores should start to rebound as students build a stronger foundational knowledge based on the standards and educators gain greater experience teaching them.

The college- and career-readiness standard is aligned with postsecondary expectations and requires more than rote memorization for tests. Students are required to think creatively and critically, reason and solve problems – skills they must learn and that will serve them well in the long run.

With new state tests, parents should be able to tell as early as 3rd grade if their student is on track for college/career-readiness, and if not, inquire what is being done to get them back on track.

The results of the Kentucky tests are more closely aligned to results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the nation's report card. This national assessment measures

student success at a much higher level than most state tests have in the past.

This is the first step on a path of continuous improvement for districts, schools, teachers and students.

Stay the course and don't get discouraged by lower test scores. This is the right thing for kids to ensure they are ready for college/career and to compete in a global economy.

The results from K-PREP and high school end-of-course exams are crucial to planning and progress. Our schools, districts and the state all review the data when determining how to improve.

Remember, our focus is on college/career-readiness for all students. We are making progress toward that goal as reflected in our college/career-readiness rate.

Should you move, your child can pick up where he/she left off.

With more than 45 states implementing the Common Core, if you move, your child won't have to start over with standards based on different expectations at different grade levels leaving them vulnerable to learning gaps.

Despite what detractors want you to believe, Common Core has a lot of support in Kentucky.

A recent poll by the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA) revealed more than 90 percent of school boards support Common Core; TELL KY Survey results show that 97 percent of teachers are teaching curriculum aligned with Common Core.

Test scores data release

On Sept. 27, parents of Kentucky school children will receive student test scores that show college- and career-readiness.

Now is the time to talk to your child about college- and career-readiness expectations and to lay the groundwork for postsecondary education options. To learn more about what your child's test scores mean, don't hesitate to ask your child's teacher or counselor. Here are some other tips:

- Become familiar with Kentucky Core Academic Standards.
- Don't judge your child on the basis of a single test score.
- Monitor your child's progress.
- Maintain high expectations and support your child in meeting them.

State agencies develop plan to reduce academic interruptions for foster children

Form designed to assist caseworkers, improve education outcomes for most vulnerable students

Kentucky children in foster care will be able to quickly and easily access their education records, no matter where they may live, which will reduce unnecessary interruptions or delays in their schooling.

Representatives from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), with input from the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA), have developed a mutually beneficial implementation plan to obtain school records without parental consent for children in foster care.

The accessibility of these records by DCBS caseworkers will reduce interruptions in the academic lives of these students.

The plan allows DCBS caseworkers to use an "Educational Passport" form that streamlines the process of seeking records of a child without parental consent. The caseworkers will provide school districts with proof that the agency has legal custody or is otherwise legally responsible for the care and protection of the child. School districts will document each caseworker request using a form created by the KSBA.

The new plan is part of Kentucky's implementation of the [Uninterrupted Scholar's Act \(USA\)](#), signed by President Barack Obama in January 2013, which amends the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) to make it easier for child-welfare agencies to obtain the education records of children and youth with whom they work.

The USA permits educational agencies and institutions to disclose a student's education records without parental consent to DCBS caseworkers. FERPA protects the privacy of students' education records, giving certain rights to parents.

"KDE is committed to working with our state and other education partners to improve the educational outcomes of some of Kentucky's most vulnerable students," Education Commissioner Terry Holliday said. "KDE will continue to provide guidance and support to districts regarding this important issue."

The Uninterrupted Scholar's Act does not exclude or make exception for special education records. In addition to the USA, Kentucky regulation provides that parents may grant authority in writing for a foster parent to make educational decisions on the child's behalf.

"Our partnership with the Department for Education in implementing the Uninterrupted Scholars Act will contribute toward the improvement of educational outcomes for Kentucky's children in foster care," DCBS Commissioner Teresa James said. "This act allows us timely possession of educational records, thereby reducing interruptions in the academic lives of children in out-of-home care."



KDE introduces Media Portal; makes video content easier to access

The Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) [Media Portal](#) provides school administrators, teachers, KDE staff and others with access to a single repository for all of the agency's video content.

Users no longer need to search multiple locations for KDE videos.

Parents are encouraged to visit the portal to get the latest news in education and to see what lies ahead for Kentucky students.

The department produces videos on a broad range of topics aligned with KDE's strategic plan. New KDE iTunesU content also is available through the portal.

Videos are grouped in categories and searchable by tag words. Among the video features are recordings of the Kentucky Board of Education meetings, superintendent webcasts and webcasts on the Professional Growth and Effectiveness System. A number of other webcasts, information and training videos also are available.

The KDE Media Portal feeds video content to KDE's news mobile app for Android, Windows and iPhones and also supports video content on KDE's website.

Videos are accessible using most Internet browsers running on PCs, Apple computers and mobile devices.

In brief...

Learn healthy habits with the *KET Healthy Me App*

To preschool-age children, 30 seconds can seem like hours and two minutes an eternity. So when you ask them to wash their hands for 30 seconds or brush their teeth for two minutes, chances are they barely will make it 20 seconds on either task.

The [KET Healthy Me](#) app is a fun way for kids to get a sense of how long 30 seconds and two minutes are so that they have a better understanding of how much time they need to spend washing their hands and brushing their teeth. [Download it for free from iTunes](#). The game also can be played on desktop computers via [PBS LearningMedia](#).

September designated Kentucky Archaeology Month

September has been designated Archaeology Month in Kentucky with activities including lectures and hands-on public excavations planned across the state. This is the first observance of Kentucky Archaeology Month, created to celebrate the state's rich historic and prehistoric past revealed through the professional study of archaeology. Another goal is to generate greater awareness and appreciation of what archaeology and the research of artifacts and land features have yet to tell us about early cultures and previous generations.

Hundreds of preregistered school students will take part in demonstrations Sept. 20-21. For more, see www.livingarchaeologyweekend.org.

ADHD, Asperger's and academic performance

Stephan Silverman will speak at an Oct. 4 event in Shepherdsville hosted by the Learning Disabilities Association of Kentucky.

The workshop will focus on the broadening of ADHD and the changing definition of Asperger's Syndrome. Knowing how this impacts parents, children, psychologists who treat these children and teachers who work with them is critical to the success of these children with special needs. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Kentucky Exceptional Children's Conference design contest for students with disabilities

The Council for Exceptional Children invites students to create an image that will be featured on T-shirts for the Annual Exceptional Children's Conference. This contest is open to students with disabilities in grades K-12. The theme is Putting Plans into Action! The entry deadline is Sept. 27.

Entries submitted by e-mail must be scanned or saved as a JPG picture file and sent to vsartsky@icloud.com. There are other requirements to enter. For more information, contact [Delaire Rowe](#) at (270) 904-7019.

Governor's Scholars Program hosting reunion

For 30 years, the Governor's Scholars Program (GSP) has brought Kentucky's "best and brightest" rising seniors together for a summer academic experience unlike any other.

On Sept. 27 and 28, GSP alumni will celebrate the program's 30th anniversary with a weekend-long gathering in Louisville.

GSP alumni, faculty and staff from every year are encouraged to attend this inaugural gathering, with a special focus on groups celebrating their reunions:

- 1983, 30 years
- 1988, 25 years
- 1993, 20 years
- 1998, 15 years
- 2003, 10 years
- 2008, five years

The reunion is being held at the Kentucky Center in Louisville. The event kicks off at 6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 27, with a reception. Saturday focuses on the GSP Alumni Association annual meeting, beginning at 8 a.m.

Tickets are available by going to the [Kentucky Center website](#) box office for purchase; For Friday evening, \$25, or both days, \$60. [Hotel reservations](#) are available at the Galt House for a discounted rate.

Alumni also are encouraged to connect on social media; GSP alumni sites include GSPSync.tumblr.com, Facebook.com/GSPSync, Twitter.com/GSPSync and on [LinkedIn](#).

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